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FESTIVAL OF THE THREE CHOIRS.

Thursday.

Yesterday I withheld my notice of Dr Arnold's new cantata, *Sennacherib*, for the reason, amongst others, that it really deserves careful treatment. Some of my critical colleagues have dealt with this work in the cavalier fashion of a country squire who drives a yokel out of the path of his horse by a contemptuous touch of the whip. I cannot follow their example. A copy of *Sennacherib* lies before me, and on the cover are imprinted the titles of no fewer than forty-seven works by the organist of Winchester Cathedral—works ranging from an oratorio down to a song. A composer so voluminous and so acceptable to those very practical critics, the publishers, is not to be lightly dismissed. Without any question whatever, I bow to the musician who has bestowed upon the world an oratorio, a cantata, six anthems, six services, nine works for the pianoforte, six part songs, three madrigals, and a prize glee.

Dr Arnold seems to be curiously affected by the many disreputable characters who figure in the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures. I can understand this without the necessity of assuming what, indeed, is not for a moment to be entertained—that he cherishes any sort of sympathy with them. Dr Arnold has written an oratorio on the subject of Ahab. Ahab was a very bad man, and the only possible appeal he makes to our feelings bases itself upon the fact that he had Jezebel for wife. Now the Winchester musician has elevated to the same pitch the Assyrian who, according to Byron,

*"Came down like a wolf on the fold,
His cohorts all gleaming in purple and gold."*

This, however, is a change for the better. Sennacherib was a respectable gentleman compared with Ahab. He simply had the annexation fever upon him, and, if he got in the way of the angels who guarded Jerusalem, it may be assumed that he saw no reason to suspect Hezekiah of having formed any such alliance. The inference is that Dr Arnold likes to deal with a consistent character. Many other composers embarrass themselves with the mingled piety and wickedness of Old Testament heroes; Dr Arnold prefers a simpler nature, and who shall blame him therefore? It is, of course, understood that no one greatly cares about Sennacherib, or even about Hezekiah himself. The Assyrian and the Hebrew are mere lay-figures upon which the composer fits a musical dress. I beg pardon. Sennacherib is really not a figure at all. On looking at the libretto, I find his name mentioned twice, but he is not a person of the drama. He acts entirely through his representative, Rabshakeh, a truculent individual of the military type, opposed to whom are Hezekiah, Israel, Abi, and, incidentally, but not ineffectively, the Destroying Angel. This complicates matters a little, and tends to promote the feeling of utter indifference upon which Dr Arnold appears to have reckoned when composing his music.

Dr. Arnold begins his cantata with an orchestral movement, entitled "The Besieged City," after which is a "March of the Assyrians." Military critics would, perhaps, object that the march should have come first, inasmuch as besieging armies usually "sit down" before the place they intend to capture. Upon this, however, I am not disposed to lay stress. It is of greater importance to state that the *adagio* representing the besieged city suggests in a very forcible way the extremely unpleasant experiences of those girt about with fire and steel. It might be presented by Prince Bismarck to fire-eating Parisian editors as a first and terrible warning. The march has quite a different character, and its commonplace is, no doubt, the result of deep design, though the purpose of design does not clearly appear. Here, as a matter of fact, we stand face to face with the great problem of the cantata. The work is a gigantic note of interrogation. It asks, in capital letters, "Why?" and there is no answer. A chorus, "Behold the Assyrians," carries on the enigma, which is intensified in a soprano solo for Abi, "The soul in anguish"—a remarkable piece of work, intelligible only on the assumption that Dr Arnold desired to give the audience a practical exemplification of his theme. Certainly, the agony of this solo is intense. It suggests a musical Laocoön, every nerve and muscle straining against an irresistible fate. As here, so in many places elsewhere. The duet for Abi and Hezekiah, "O House of Jacob," certainly forms an exception. It is not enigmatical at all, only commonplace. Further than this, in the matter of detail, I need not go. Dr Arnold's last chorus, "The sword of the enemy," is effective enough, and does not ask "Why?" but the rest puts the query over and over again, while the scope of the interrogation ultimately so expands as to take in the acceptance and performance of the work. The "Why?" however, is for Dr Arnold to consider most. Is it worth his while to write music pretentious without reason and unattractive without knowing it? which has hardly a redeeming feature, save, perhaps, to the curious who are for ever studying the aberrations of humanity. Let the composer consider

the point, and spare us more of the laboured nothings that abound throughout *Sennacherib*. At the same time, let Festival committees exercise some sort of discretion, and not inflict upon the public music which, if potential at all, is so only for evil.

The performance, conducted by Dr. Arnold in person, was of an ordinary character. No one save the composer seemed to be greatly interested in what was doing, but nevertheless the soloists—Mdlle Avigliana, Mr Newth and Mr King—strode conscientiously to make the best of a task which even at the best could only be ungrateful. The second part of the concert was given up to Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*; the solos by Miss Davies, Mrs Warren, and Mr Lloyd. Here amends were made for previous defects, and the rather scanty audience found themselves well rewarded by listening to a genuine masterpiece; one of those things which are the despair of weak contemporaneous talent. It is much to be regretted that a larger number of amateurs did not assemble in the Cathedral to welcome the novelties of yesterday, but the scanty attendance surprised nobody, and only showed with what carefulness festival managers should move in the direction of new works. It is one thing to clamour for novelty and quite another to present that which is worth having. The Gloucester committee must be fully aware of this. They scored a partial success with Dr. Stainer's *St Mary Magdalen*, and a complete failure with Dr. Arnold's *Sennacherib*.

This morning, notwithstanding doubtful weather, the Cathedral was filled in every part with persons anxious to hear the *Redemption* of M. Gounod. The streets had the aspect they wear on a *Messiah* day, while, to keep up the resemblance, word was early passed round that every ticket had been sold. This, indeed, proved to be the case, so that only with difficulty could the great crowd reach their places, directed by inexperienced stewards and fussy door-keepers. It is almost needless to add that with such an attendance the extraordinary arrangements made for the Press utterly broke down. We were marshalled on two benches precisely where every late comer and every chattering gentleman with a rosette in his coat could incommodate us. We were packed like the proverbial herrings in a barrel, and labelled, not on our own backs, but on the backs of the benches, so that the modest ones amongst us might be abashed by curious regard. It is, perhaps, a small matter that under such circumstances I could hear little or nothing of Mr Villiers Stanford's *Elegiac Symphony*, and am bound to decline giving an opinion upon it. On the other hand, it is important to tell the Gloucester managers that if they invite critics to their Festival ordinary civility requires them to afford proper facilities. As to what facilities are proper they may have their opinion, but let me tell them that at no festival in the kingdom are members of the press so scurvyly treated as at that of Gloucester. Let me tell them, also, that there is no reason whatever why this state of things should be any longer tolerated. They may want to amend; in that case a communication with the Festival authorities at Leeds, Birmingham, or Bristol, at Worcester, or Hereford, would show them the way, and, I hope, bring a blush to their faces. The performance of Gounod's *Trilogy* was most creditable to all concerned, and must have fully answered the expectations of the many who came prepared to be impressed by a remarkable and deeply religious composition. Regarding the nature of the music, nothing remains to be said; but a good many remarks are invited by the extraordinary popularity of an oratorio which is largely deficient in ordinary musical interest. At the bottom of this, of course, lies the unique and moving story appealing to a people among whom certain forms of religious sentimentalism are a power. Connected with any other subject, M. Gounod's music would have been a failure, and it is greatly to his credit that he discerned the extent to which the subject would suffer the method. It cannot be needful to say that the *Redemption*, performed in a cathedral, made a profound impression. If it usually does so in a concert-hall, how much more in a place consecrated to religion, and in itself a monument of sacred art. The performance, I repeat, was most creditable, and it reflected the highest honour upon Mr C. L. Williams, the conductor, who showed admirable judgment and no mean skill. In point of fact, he won his spurs, and is henceforth to be spoken of with the respect due to acknowledged position. The solos were in the safe hands of Mdlle Avigliana, Miss Hilda Wilson, Messrs Lloyd, Newth, Breton, and Santley, all of whom were heard to advantage, though the honours fell, as of course, to Mr Lloyd and Mr Santley, each *facile princeps* in his department.

Friday.

The programme of last night's concert presented the usual mixture of things new and old, good and bad, with which a festival audience is supposed to be in sympathy after the more serious work of the morning. Its chief feature was Mendelssohn's *First Walpurgis*

Night, a cantata not seldom presented on these occasions, and usually regarded as a certain "draw." There are ample reasons for such favour, as every amateur knows, but I need not point them out. The thing to observe is the preference shown during the festival to Mendelssohn's music. We have had his *Elijah*, *Lobgesang*, and *Walpurgis Night*, and he, the still fascinating because essentially gracious and graceful composer, has had the lion's share of the programme. There is significance in the fact, since the standard works given are never lightly chosen, but rather carefully considered, with a view to the greatest measure of public patronage. As is the place given to Mendelssohn in the scheme, so is the place he occupies in general favour. This says much for a healthy musical taste hereabouts. The community need never fear artistic degeneracy while Mendelssohn retains his popularity. A fair rendering of the *Walpurgis Night* made its beauties manifest to a large audience, by whom the efforts of the leading artists were especially appreciated. Mdme Patey gave the solo allotted to "A Woman of the People" with much dramatic expression; Mr Bouccott Newth made a favourable effect with the tenor music; and Mr Santley is always at his best when impersonating the "high priest with the trombones behind him," of whom Mendelssohn, in his letters from Italy, speaks with such affection. The chorus and orchestra, conducted by Mr Williams, did their work with spirit and fair success.

Further distinction awaited the instrumentalists in connection with Spohr's beautiful overture to *Jessonda* and Beethoven's *Prometheus*; while the excellent chorus was heard to renewed advantage in Pearsall's madrigal, "Why weeps, alas! my ladye love." Some songs of interest and attraction were sung during the evening by Misses Anna Williams, Mary Davies, Hilda Wilson, Mdme Patey, Messrs King, Santley, and others. The first-named lady, for example, gave "Ocean, thou mighty monster," with remarkable energy; giving also in her best style Cowen's charming songs, "If love were what the rose is," and "Parted presence;" Miss Mary Davies contributed Schubert's "Der Neugierige" and "Wohin"—a capital choice; Miss Hilda Wilson being heard to advantage in "To the immortals," a song composed by Miss Ellicott, daughter of the Bishop of Gloucester; and Mdme Patey doing full justice to Gounod's Birmingham song "The golden thread." All these, it will be observed, are works of a high class, such as may claim festival rank. They enrich any programme, and nothing but good can come of their performance. From the others I choose to mention a song, "Niar the Soulless," by Anderton—one in which that composer has put forth a good deal of strength. It was well rendered by Mr King. The March in *Tannhäuser* brought the concert to an end.

Handel's *Messiah* was performed in the Cathedral this morning, and the sacred oratorio drew, as usual, a very numerous audience, most of whom came streaming in from the rural districts with eager faces. The audience, however, was not as large as on former occasions, this being attributable to the counter attraction of Gounod's *Redemption* on the previous day, and to the fact that no singer of the rank of Mdme Albani took part. Those who saw the crowded cathedral yesterday knew that the *Messiah* would suffer; while it has all along been clear that the second reason assigned would tell powerfully on the attendance. Still, there was not much cause for complaint this morning, and Handel's immortal strains were given with all the effect, and heard with all the reverence that tradition exacts.

It is quite needless to tell in detail how the *Messiah* was performed. That matter everybody at once assumes in decided favour of the executants; but it may be stated that the soprano airs were divided between Misses Mary Davies and Anna Williams—whose name, by a scarcely pardonable inadvertence, I omitted to mention yesterday as that of the chief soprano in Gounod's *Redemption*. In the one work, as in the other, Miss Williams sustained her high character; while, as regards Handel's music, much was gained in effect from the sweet voice and sympathetic style of Miss Mary Davies. Miss Hilda Wilson and Mdme Patey shared the contralto solos, the singing of both artists being much admired, while that of Mdme Patey made a sensation. Messrs Lloyd, King, and Santley completed a cast which could not easily be beaten for all-round excellence. The grand choruses were, with scarce an exception, finely given.

Nothing became the festival like its ending, for this evening, in accordance with goodly custom at Gloucester, a special service took place in the nave of the Cathedral, at which the band and chorus assisted, admission being free to all purchasers of a sixpenny service book. There was an immense congregation, many persons waiting at the doors before five o'clock, although the proceedings were not

fixed to begin till an hour and a half later. At half-past six the vast and splendid edifice was crowded in every available part, not only the nave being filled, but the choir, the transepts, and the chapels, though in these places nothing could be seen. From my position on the organ screen, the spectacle was most impressive. Before me the heavy Norman pillars rose out of, and the ponderous vaulted roof hung over, a sea of human beings stretching away to the far distance of the west window, while behind, in semi-gloom, another crowd was enshrinéd, so to speak, by the exquisite perpendicular gothic of the marvellous choir. Such a sight struck me as worthy of the festival, and as one that almost of itself justified the triennial gathering in the sacred place. If the spectacle impressed when the multitude sat still and silent, how much more when they joined in the exercises of the service. The musical portion was splendidly given under Mr Williams's direction, the psalms being chanted and the responses sung by the festival chorus with the precision of a trained choir. Tallis's immortal strains did duty, of course, in the "preces." The special psalms were recited to chants by Battishill, Garrett, and Humphreys, and the music to the "Magnificat" and "Nunc Dimittis" was from Walmisley's fine service in D minor—a most excellent and masterly example of genuine church composition. The anthem for tenor, solo, chorus, and orchestra had been specially composed by Mr C. H. Lloyd, M.A., Mus. Bac., lately organist of the cathedral, who conducted its performance. All who knew Mr Lloyd's ability expected a good work, but the thing hoped for must have realized the hope and left a balance, as well as the music written and in hearing so effective. The opening chorus, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor," extends to the full length necessary for complete development of the ideas which are as appropriate in themselves as refined and scholarly in their expression. The tenor solo, "The Lord comfort him," may be a little less satisfactory, but the concluding chorus, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel," with its too short fugue on the words "World without end, Amen," brings the whole to a fine and impressive close. Mr Lloyd is a Gloucestershire man, and the beautiful Western county has a right to number him amongst her worthies. The anthem, on the whole effectively performed, was heard by the huge congregation with rapt attention. A hymn was sung during the offertory, and before the blessing the "Hallelujah" from Beethoven's *Mount of Olives* brought the week's music to a triumphant close. No sermon was preached, but the prayers and lessons were read by the cathedral clergy, with whom were many reverend gentlemen present in Gloucester for the festival. Upon the religious significance of the ceremony this is no place to dwell, but a word of hearty praise may be given to an arrangement which made it possible for even the poorest to share in the festival music.

—D. T.

MACFARREN'S KING DAVID.

(From the "Sheffield and Rotherham Independent.")

Leeds is now "looming large" upon the musical horizon, not only on account of the important services to "the divine art," which that town has rendered in the past, but also for the rich promise of the future. Now that the Triennial Festival is within measurable distance, there is the utmost interest manifested in the prospective performances, and from all sides come inquiries respecting the number, character, scope, and importance of the new compositions to be submitted. Whatever else may be said of the committee, it cannot be charged with overlooking native talent, the three new works written for the Festival being by English composers. This is as it should be, for, although the claims of genius should always be acknowledged, irrespective of nationality, the time has now come for us to say, in a musical sense, "England for the English," there being unmistakable symptoms that our country is rousing up in musical matters, and ere long will be fully abreast of our German brothers in art. The new works referred to above are *King David*, an oratorio, by Sir G. A. Macfarren; *Gray's Elegy*, a cantata, by Alfred Cellier; and the "97th Psalm," by Joseph Barnby. As the composers are well known for able and conscientious work, there is little doubt that the wisdom of the choice will be abundantly confirmed. Of the novelties, the chief interest centres in the distinguished Professor's oratorio, not only on account of being the work of the greatest English living exponent of composition, but also because it is the last and ripest production of the composer of *John the Baptist*—perhaps the only oratorio composed since *Elijah* which will occupy a prominent place amongst the classics of the future, and exist when some more recent and more pretentious works are forgotten.

Whether *King David* will take rank with "The voice of one crying in the wilderness" cannot with certainty be forecast, but if profundiety of learning, purity of harmony, originality of thought,

copiousness of melody, inventiveness in counterpoint, diversity of treatment, and richness of orchestration be any criterion, the work is bound to live. There are one or two numbers which seem to present no special features, but of one of these the writer heard a member of the chorus—who happened to be in London the other day—express the most unequivocal admiration, on account of its powerful effect, although produced by such simple means. If the same be true of the other seemingly unimportant numbers, their success seems already assured, and we may hope to see *King David* raised to the dignity of being associated with "David's greater son," as depicted in the sublime strains of the mighty Handel. It is very probable that those who picture out to themselves the plan of the libretto of *David*, will at once fix upon the slaying of Goliath of Gath, the singing of the maidens, the playing before Saul, the fidelity and love of Jonathan, and other equally interesting incidents, which are so dear to the youthful mind. Hence, the first glance at the libretto will be disappointing, as none of these things have been dealt with, except by implication. Considering that Handel and others have gone over this ground there is not much wonder that the latter part of the "sweet singer's" life should be the basis of the work, and when the disappointed ones look at the title carefully, they will see that it is "David" after he has become "King," not "David, the Shepherd Boy," which the oratorio pourtrays.

But though in a sense forbidden to incorporate the earlier incidents of the Psalmist's life, these are too important to be entirely ignored; therefore, like the artist who, failing to achieve his ideal, painted a curtain over his picture and immortalised himself, so the worthy Cambridge Professor has, through the shadowy veil of the "overture," depicted the shepherd life—the summons to battle—David singing to the king—Saul's envy—and, finally, Saul's death, with such consummate skill that the beauties of the "abstract music" fully atone for the lack of oral declamation. The oratorio proper commences with a call from the Twelve Tribes for David to become their king. David's zeal for the Lord, the bringing in of the ark, and the promise of a son whose "throne shall be from everlasting," may be said to form the first part of the subject.

Then follows a sub-division, the boldness of adopting which is only equalled by the skill and delicacy of its treatment. It may be described as "The Sin," and refers to the circumstances immediately preceding and subsequent to the death of Uriah the Hittite.

Part II. of the subject may be termed the "Retribution" consequent upon the "Sin" of the latter half of Part I., and shows the fulfilment of the prophecy of Nathan—"Thus saith the Lord: Behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house." After describing the flight of Absalom through slaying his brother Ammon, the stratagem of Joab to get Absalom back again to his father's house is narrated. Then Absalom's rebellion and death are fully dwelt upon. David's grief and acknowledgment of the Divine chastisement really finish the "plot" of the oratorio. Following modern usage, there are many reflective passages interspersed with very good effect, as will be seen when each number is considered musically, which will be done forthwith.

The overture in B flat opens and finishes *allegro*, and being written in the "sonata form," there are no variations of time signature during its progress. After a few bars introductory, in which the oboes give a characteristic phrase—occurring often—the horns take up the principal subject, which is quite pastoral in its character. This is taken up by the strings, and then the oboes and bassoons, the accompaniments changing with the instruments. This part represents the "shepherd life." Suddenly the trumpets "summon to battle." The simple strains still continue, but the call becomes more imperative, the music breaks into triplets and quarters*—expressive of the national agitation—which give place to a short but stirring march indicative of the battle. This leads up to what we may term the "Court theme," which brings vividly to mind the youthful warrior in the presence of Saul, striving, with his sweet songs and soothing accompaniments on the harp, to drive away the evil spirits from the mind of the almost insane king. Presently the foregoing melodiousness gives way to the disturbing "Envy theme," which strikes the imaginative mind with its appropriateness. In the "development" following, we hear the "Court" or "Harp" theme blended with the "Envy" theme, as though the former were trying to overcome the bitter feeling by its sweetness. After several ineffectual attempts, "Envy" seems to triumph, and David is driven forth. Here we have a retrospect of his past life, the "Shepherd," "Battle," "Court," and "Envy," themes appearing and re-appearing in varied forms, until a somewhat sombre, broken, and tragic close indicates that Saul is no more.

No. 2 is a chorus divided into two parts, the former being in 3-4 time, key G, in which the people of Israel declare that David is the

God-appointed king. The second part changes to 6-8 time, and is set to the words: "Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is," &c., a sentiment suggested by the concord dwelling amongst the tribes at this time, as embodied in the act of anointing David to be "king." The opening phrase arrests attention at once, being written in "Canon," but quite unconstrained. This form of writing is maintained in the accompaniments, and where abandoned, imitation largely abounds. The second part is distinguished for a beautiful *obbligato* accompaniment, given out first by the flute, then by the clarinets, and then by both. "Celloists will rejoice over their share in the work, and the voices have every reason to be satisfied, for when the instruments rest the vocalists carry forward the figure.

In one or two places the "wind" is treated in a rather bold manner, while at the bottom of page 14 the alternation of the string and wind—recalling the exquisite effect of the closing bars of the *largo* from Beethoven's second symphony—cannot fail to charm all hearers.

In No. 3, King David (bass) declares in recit. that as "None ought to carry the Ark of God but the Levites," they are to bring it up to its appointed place. A telling harp introduction—suggestive of the singer accompanying himself—leads to a song in 3-4 time, key E, which represents the King singing one of his Psalms, "I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eyelids to slumber," &c. The accompaniments to this are worthy note on account of the delicate contrasts of tone and imitations of phrases.

No. 4, "Psalm at the bringing in of the ark," is a splendid chorus in common time, key C. The trumpet sounded by the priests—which is supposed to be re-echoed from afar—gives the call to worship. A short and original symphony for the cellos leads up to the entry of the tenors, who sing, "Give thanks unto the Lord," and while they rest, the sopranos take up the strain, the altos and basses supplying the harmony, the cellos continuing their quaint *staccato* accompaniment alone. The tenors start a new phrase, which is repeated in harmony as before. Still another phrase is given, only to be taken up by the other "parts." The next period—to the words, "Sing unto Him"—is in four-part harmony, and the strings entering here, *pp*, give a subdued fulness to it. This ushers in a repetition of the foregoing, enriched with a taking counterpoint accompaniment. A very dignified movement, in which voices and instruments move together in close harmony, emphasises the words, "Let the sea roar and the fulness thereof." Once more the tenors break forth with "O give thanks," followed by the other parts as before, but accompanied by a counterpoint in triplets, indicative of rising emotion. Following this, there is some effective work for the harp, at the words, "For He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever." The well-ordered choral writing, joined to the vigorous orchestration, from this point to the end creates the fullest assurance of the triumph of this imposing chorus. A soprano song, "The path of the just is as a shining light," is a happy reflex of the spirit of the text (key, A flat). No. 6, "The Prophecy," is noticeable for the recalling of the "Shepherd" theme, after the words, "I took thee from the sheepcote." The canon which opened No. 2, and which in Wagnerian terminology we would call the "Crowning" or "Anointing" theme, appears again as the pendant to the words, "That thou shouldst be ruler over my people Israel." When Saul is referred to a little farther on, we get a reminiscence of the "Envy" theme, and then at the climax the prophet Nathan utters the words which are repeated by the chorus, "But His throne shall be for ever." A short solo for David (key G), who asks, "Who am I, O Lord God, that Thou has brought me hitherto?" reminds one of the Court theme, in sundry parts, with good effect. After an enunciation of the text, "The seed of David is great," a finely-constructed fugue, to the words, "He shall reign for ever" (key B flat), succeeds. The introduction for organ alone, foreshadows the subject and counter-subject in a masterly manner, and, after the voices have sung the words in choral fashion, the majestic subject is taken up by the basses, followed in succession by the tenors, altos, and trebles. As is usual with the Principal of the R.A.M., the "subject" is treated by "inversion," and students of fugue will be interested to observe how the step of a "second" is replied to by a skip of a third in the counter-subject, and exactly reversed at the inversion. There is only one thing against this fine number, and that is the key of B flat, which hardly allows a triumphant finish.† The succeeding twenty-five numbers are equally worthy of a somewhat detailed notice, but it is impossible to do more than merely glance at them.

No. 9 opens with a most reposeful *andante sostenuto* in 12-8 time. The narration of David's sin is given by a contralto. Then comes a charming unaccompanied chorus, "Remember not, Lord, our offences." Nathan's parable and David's condemnation of himself are next dealt with, and form the peg upon which to hang a most

* What are quarters?—D. B.

† How about the final chorus in Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang*?—D. B.

opposite contralto solo, "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world?" A chorus of terrible earnestness follows, set to the words "Vengeance belongeth to the Lord." This finishes Part I.

The instrumental prelude to Part II, prefigures David's coming bitterness. The contralto narrates Joab's stratagem to secure the return of Absalom, and a highly-dramatic duet between the widow of Tekoah and David follows. Three choruses and a solo by Absalom deal with his return and rebellion. These usher in a most telling denunciation of evil-doers in a contralto solo, "Woe unto them that call evil good." David's followers then cry in chorus, "Arise, and let us flee," and the subsequent doings of the King, and his solicitude for his treacherous son is finely portrayed, as is also the despairing cry of "O, Absalom, my son!" A consolatory soprano solo (No. 30), "Despise not the chastening of the Lord," introduces a reprovingful chorus, after which, David takes heart in a fine solo, commencing mournfully, but ending with triumphant resignation. The final number (33), consisting of a chorus, "Joy is in heaven," quartet, "There shall be joy," and chorus, "Glory be to the Father," &c., is a fitting climax to this unmistakably great composition.

King David shows unmistakably that Professor Macfarren *does not think* that "music" consists of a series of "unrelated chords," but that the "voice" needs nothing more melodious than a series of monotones—the longer the better—with leaps or passing tones "semi-occasionally." He has shown that dramatic music can be created without the violation of all the canons of the past, and also that it is not necessary to be unbearably dull on purpose to be classical. With such facts before us, we may thankfully exclaim that there is hope yet for music "pure and undefiled."

—o—

VON HÜLSEN—"THE RING"—ANGELO—RICORDI.

(*To the Editor of the "Musical World."*)

Not long since, it was stated by English and Continental journals that Herr von Hülsen, Intendant of the Royal Theatres at Berlin, had purchased from Herr Angelo Neumann, for a sum equivalent to £1,000 of English money, the right of performing, wherever he pleased, the *Ring des Nibelungen*. The enthusiastic—and, of course, wholly disinterested—worshipper of the departed master had, however, reckoned "without his host," in other phrase, without that master's heirs. These, all and sundry, challenging Herr Neumann's legitimate claim to enter into any such arrangement, law-suits hovered in the distance. Both parties listening to discreet counsels, the dispute has been amicably settled, though considerably to the disadvantage of Herr Neumann, who, during a stipulated period, has to disburse a certain sum on account of each performance. The representation of *Parsifal* for the exclusive enjoyment of the King of Bavaria, who will listen to it in silent solitude, is postponed till May next. After this, according to Bayreuth authorities, the work will, by his Majesty's permission, be re-arranged and modified for public performance. What this re-arrangement may signify it is hard to guess. Can anything have been omitted in 1881 and 1882 which was only intended for Royal eyes and ears? No staunch disciple of Wagner will admit that a single word or a single note in *Parsifal* cou'd be expunged, or even altered, without deadly injury to the Liszt-denominated "*Œuvre Miracule*." Herr Neumann, who, it is stated, after Wagner's death, instituted a claim on his estate for damages incurred by certain losses and disappointments in his duties and rights (he imagined) as sole-administrator of the fortunes of the *Ring*, was but recently at Milan, where the House of Ricordi repudiated his claim, on the ground that they alone held the privilege in Italy, which they had purchased from Wagner himself. A pretty kettle of fish!'

DEAR SIR,—Can you politely inform me how much of all this is probable, how much doubtful, and how much absolutely true, thereby obliging, yours respectfully, SIMON HALF.

Half Moon Street, Sept. 13.

[Herr the Baron von Hülsen has resigned his position as Intendant of the Royal Italian Opera, Berlin, after holding it for half a century.—Dr Blidge.]

VIENNA.—A "Cycle" of all Wagner's dramatic works—excepting, of course, *Parsifal*—is to be given next December, at the Imperial Operahouse. Out of consideration for the artists, there will be breaks in the performances, which extends over some twenty days. The hardest task will fall to Winkelmann, who will sustain the characters of Rienzi, Tannhäuser, Stolzing, Tristan, Siegmund, and Siegfried.

LIST OF THE BAND FOR THE LEEDS MUSICAL FESTIVAL, 1883.

First Violins.—Messrs J. T. Carrodus (*Principal*), J. W. Acomb, Viotto Collins, J. W. Dawson, A. Gibson, S. D. Grimson, E. Halfpenny, G. Haddock, E. Jones, Val. Nicholson, C. Newton, Thos. Oldaker, W. F. Parker, F. Ralph, F. W. Rendle, E. Roberts, J. H. Reed, A. Streather, F. M. Wallace, and T. Watson.

Second Violins.—Messrs Alf. Burnett (*Principal*), H. Bailey, B. Carrodus, G. W. Collins, G. W. Cubitt, L. Diehl, J. Earnshaw, W. A. Easton, J. W. Ganniss, H. Gibson, E. A. Haddock, H. Morley, A. Reynolds, C. Snewing, L. Szczepanowski, W. B. Sewell, J. B. Thirlwall, and Alphonse Villin.

Violas.—Messrs C. W. Doyle (*Principal*), W. Burnett, J. W. Bowling, W. R. Bowie, C. Colchester, H. Channell, J. Drake, W. H. Hann, W. Hill, T. Lawrence, T. Reynolds, A. Stohling, S. R. Webb, and W. W. Waud.

Violoncellos.—Messrs Edward Howell (*Principal*), J. Boatwright, Charles Brie, W. Buels, Jas. E. Hambleton, W. C. Hann, C. Ould, W. F. Reed, J. Saunders, H. T. Trust, E. Vieuxtemp, W. E. Whitehouse, and E. Woolhouse.

Double Basses.—Messrs A. C. White (*Principal*), H. Burnett, A. Collins, C. H. Dearlove, W. Griffiths, C. Harper, jun., S. J. Jakeway, E. Maney, E. Ould, W. J. Strugnell, F. Tyler, J. H. Waud, and J. P. Waud.

Flutes.—Messrs J. Radcliff, W. L. Barrett, A. P. Vivian, and Alf. Toothill.

Oboes.—Messrs H. G. Lebon, G. Horton, J. A. Smith, and E. V. Davis.

Clarinettes.—Messrs Julian Egerton, H. J. Snelling, J. Maycock, and J. Spencer.

Bass Clarinet.—Mr J. Maycock.

Bassoons.—Messrs J. F. Hutchins, T. E. Wotton, G. W. Trout, and—Hurley.

Contra-Fagotto.—Mr J. W. Hawes.

Horns.—Messrs T. Mann, J. Range, J. W. Standen, and W. Hinchev.

Trumpets.—Messrs W. Ellis and F. McGrath.

Cornets.—Messrs J. C. Scott and F. A. Backwell.

Trombones.—Messrs C. Geard, C. Hadfield, and J. Matt.

Ophicleide.—Mr S. Hughes.

Harp.—Mr J. Cheahire.

Drums.—Mr John Baker.

Side Drum and Triangle.—Mr W. G. Austen.

Bas Drum and Cymbals.—Mr. F. Middleditch.

Librarians.—Messrs. F. Middleditch and C. E. Cooke.

MR W. G. CUSINS AND THE PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

(*To the Editor of "The Musical World."*)

SIR,—I hear that the cause of Mr W. G. Cusins having resigned the post he has so long ably filled as conductor of the Philharmonic orchestra is the dissatisfaction expressed by other directors, as well as by members of the Society, with the selection from Liszt's oratorio, *Christus*, which, as those who were present at the concert in question will remember, was received by a large majority of the audience in a manner as far as possible from complimentary. Whether this be true or not—and, in any case, I entirely agree with the dissentients—the secession of Mr Cusins is to be regretted. However, the master of the Queen's band has occupation enough, and perhaps now he may feel inclined to devote more of his leisure time to composition. May I ask of Dr Blidge, he knows everything, whether this be absolutely the fact?

A SUBSCRIBER TO THE PHILHARMONIC.

[It may or may not be true; and there's the humour of it. I agree with Ancient Pistol, that it was too bad to string up poor Nym for "a pyx of little price."—Dr Blidge.]

A fair effort is being made to carry out the proposed repairs and alterations in the Stuttgart Theatre. The necessary outlay is put down at 360,000 marks (about £18,000 of our money); but what is that for a Theatre Royal, and still more, as far as music is concerned, a "national" theatre in the bargain? The Operahouse so consistently and liberally supported by the Wurtemburg Court has, in its way and according to its means, played a more or less conspicuous part in the history of the lyric drama at home.—Graphic.

WOLVERHAMPTON MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

Wolverhampton, Thursday.

Ever since the year 1863 Wolverhampton has triennially held a Musical Festival for the benefit of the Staffordshire General Hospital, the funds of which are now the better on account thereof by the sum of nearly £1,500. Hitherto the recurring solemnity has not attracted much more than local attention, for reasons of a perfectly intelligible and sufficient nature. When festival proceedings are limited to a single day, and mainly determined, as to artistic character, by the resources of the neighbourhood, it can hardly be expected that they will obtain notice beyond a limited circle. The committee, in view of the present performances, resolved to improve upon this state of things, and take a decided step towards placing their Festival more on an equality with those which, from time to time, receive national attention. It may be assumed that artistic considerations influenced them in coming to the decision just stated; but they also hoped, by enlarging the scope of their operations, to afford increased aid to a most deserving charity. In their prospectus I read as follows:

"It will be observed that, with the exception of the first Festival, the financial results attending the celebrations have not met with that large measure of success which is desirable. In order, if possible, to effect a change in this respect, the scheme of the present Festival has been settled on larger and more important lines than its predecessors. Two days with four concerts have now taken the place of the hitherto usual one day with two concerts, and by this means not only have greater variety and attraction been provided, but the expense per concert is considerably lessened."

That the committee have adopted a wise course will be shown, I quite believe, by the result of their adventure. We are now, in fact, witnessing the growth of a Festival which may eventually take rank with the best. There is no insuperable reason against such a consequence. Wolverhampton is an important town in the centre of a dense population; it has decided musical predilections, and there is now clear proof that, as regards festival giving, it possesses public spirit.

In one respect the Festival continues to run pretty much on the old lines—that is to say, its executive resources are chiefly drawn from the neighbourhood. The leading solo vocalists are, of course, from London, as a glance at the names of Mdmes Anna Williams, Mary Davies, and Patey, Messrs Lloyd, Maas, King, and Foli, suffices to show. On the other hand the conductor, Dr Swinnerton Heap, is a highly esteemed professor residing in Birmingham; the orchestra, though led by Mr Carrodus, is for the most part filled with provincial performers—it numbers nearly sixty instruments; while the chorus singers are entirely drawn from the ranks of the Wolverhampton Festival Choral Society. I regard this predominance of local talent as a very interesting and important feature; one, moreover, that should be greatly encouraged. A serious drawback to the progress of music in England is the fact that country towns are to so large an extent dependent upon the metropolis for efficient orchestras. This dependence is bad every way for those who are subject to it. It checks local enterprise by entailing heavy expenses, and it makes very difficult, almost impossible, that steady and persistent culture of high-class music which is indispensable to real and rapid advance. Happily we see in our large towns evidence that efficient local orchestras are coming into existence, while in not a few places much has been already accomplished through their agency. Complete independence of the metropolis may, perhaps, never be attained, for, in the future, as in the past, London will attract to itself the best performers. But it is one thing to obtain from London half a dozen such men as Mr Carrodus, and another to bring down a complete band. Here at Wolverhampton we are having a genuine Midland Festival, for I believe nearly all the instrumentalists are those associated with the admirable concerts given in Birmingham by Mr Stockley.

The programme of the Festival has been drawn up with conspicuous taste and judgment, and forms a good representation of classical and modern works, within the limits laid down. No absolute novelty is in the scheme, the time being not yet ripe for the engagement of new compositions, but of unfamiliar music there is certainly enough. *Elijah* stands first in the exercise of a right which no Festival committee has yet been found bold enough to dispute, even if willing so to do. Mendelssohn's oratorio formed the programme this morning. For this evening Sir G. A. Macfarren's Glasgow cantata, *The Lady of the Lake*, is set down, together with a selection, comprising the Ballet of Sylphs from Berlioz's *Faust* and the overture to Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*. At the concert to be given to-morrow morning Festival goers will hear Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony, Hummel's "Alma Virgo," Gounod's *Messe Solennelle*, and Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, a selection not less rich than liberal; while for the final concert are promised Mackenzie's Bristol

cantata, *Jason*, and a selection, including Mendelssohn's violin concerto (Mr Carrodus), the overture to *Egmont*, and a number of attractive vocal pieces. From this it appears that the chief interest gathers round the second day's performances, especially connecting itself with *Jason*, a work so badly treated when produced at Bristol that it can hardly be said to have had a hearing at all. In another letter I hope to deal carefully with the pretensions of this new Festival as an exemplification of what can be done on an ambitious scale with resources obtained almost entirely in the district.

TWO QUARTETS BY VERHULST.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR.—Verhulst, the well-esteemed Dutch composer, when at Leipzig, 1838, composed two quartets, which he dedicated to Mendelssohn, by whom he had been received with great courtesy and artistic friendliness. Do you think these would be worth the attention of Mr S. Arthur Chappell, with an eye to his Popular Concerts?

[Apply to Mr S. Arthur Chappell, from whom you will doubtless receive an answer more or less to the purpose.]

RUBINSTEIN.—Anton Rubinstein's *Nero* is to be given during the forthcoming operatic season in the Russian capital. *Nero*, when brought out at Pollini's Hamburg Theatre, was the work to which the unhappy *Damon*, by the same composer, was preferred by the Covent Garden management—to what small purpose opera-goers can hardly have forgotten. *Nero*, according to general report, is Rubinstein's favourite composition for the theatre; and it is said that, on a particular occasion, when the conversation turned upon Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*, Rubinstein, pointing to a score which lay open on his pianoforte, exclaimed—"There is my *Bible*!" His *Bible* was *Nero*. This, while savouring a little of egotism, at all events showed his imaginary independence with regard to the Wagner doctrines; we say "imaginary," because the later works of Rubinstein prove uncontested that those doctrines have, in a greater or lesser degree, influenced his tone of thought, as they have influenced that of many of Wagner's disciples with whom the overwhelming Moldavian would disdain to be compared. The subject of *Nero* opens out a new field to ambitious composers of the modern stamp. The pages of Suetonius, historian of the "First Twelve Caesars," supply the materials for at least half as many plots, of which, modern "librettists" might avail themselves; and thus, with the aid of the musician, perpetuate, in "infinite *melos*," the thoughts and deeds of some of the most execrable monsters that have disgraced humanity. If an episode be required to impart variety, Cornelius Tacitus is at hand; and, for the matter of that, should a wholesome dash of grim comic humour be deemed essential, Petronius' *Arbiter* (*Nero's factotum*, by the way, until the sham *Nero*, under the guidance of Tigellinus, became the *Nero* we all know), may be consulted with advantage. Some, no doubt, wonder how these things escaped the notice of Richard Wagner; but Wagner had a strong objection to "historical opera," and, after feebly imitating Meyerbeer in *Rienzi*, resorted almost exclusively to myth—far better suited to his genius, which could not pourtray humanity in its positive essentials. So that Rubinstein has now the field to himself; and if a *Tiberius*, a *Caligula*, a *Claudius*, a *Domitian* were to follow in regular order, few would complain—as few, perhaps, would rejoice. In sober truth, opera, as represented just now, not only in Germany, but in Italy and France, has deteriorated into a matter of quantity rather than of quality, as is especially manifested in France by Gounod and Thomas in their latest operas, and by Massenet, Saint Saëns, &c., of the younger generation—all, afflicted with the same epidemic, having little or nothing to say, yet saying it at full length, and holding us by the button-hole with anything rather than the impressive effect created by the Ancient Mariner—"who stopped one of three," on their way as guests to the marriage feast. "Much bruit and little fruit" is, it cannot be denied, an apt motto for the actual musical period. Indisputable signs give warning that some of our young and rising composers are not insensible to the charms of the tempter, and as a *Farsifal, pur sang*, can hardly be reckoned among them, they are not unlikely to fall into the arms of Kundry. For the last original words spoken in dramatic music we are probably indebted to the Italian Verdi and the German, Wagner—so materially differing from each other, and yet both men of unquestionable genius.—Graphic.

Dr Hans von Bülow, thoroughly restored to health, has resumed his position as Capellmeister to the Duke of Meiningen and conductor of the orchestra at the Meiningen Theatre.

DEATH.

On September 11th, suddenly, at his residence, 60, Gloucester Crescent, Regent's Park, DUTTON COOK, Esq., aged 52.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A CHORISTER.—The oratorio *The Resurrection* was composed, not by Sir Arthur Sullivan, but by Sir George Macfarren, especially for the Birmingham Festival of 1877, when it was duly, and with great applause, produced. *John the Baptist* was originally intended for the Hereford Festival of 1869; but, for some reason unexplained, being withheld on that occasion, was secured by Mr Charles Hallé for the Bristol Festival of 1873. Its success at Bristol led to its production at the Leeds Festival of 1874, and its success at Leeds induced the committee of management to apply to Sir George Macfarren for an oratorio on their own account. That oratorio was *Joseph*, the enthusiastic reception of which is not forgotten. The Leeds people, at any rate, have borne it in mind, and hence the commission for another oratorio, *King David* (its composer's fourth), which will be heard at the Festival next month.

INQUIRER.—Yes. The late Charles Horsley, son of the famous glee-composer, composed an oratorio entitled *David*, which was performed (as was *Gideon*, another oratorio from his pen) at Exeter Hall. Horsley's *David* came some years after the *David* of the Chevalier Neukomm, written for and produced at the Birmingham Festival of 1844, and introduced to London by the Sacred Harmonic Society. It was Mr Hullah who tried an experiment upon Rheinthal's *Jephtha*, at one of his well-remembered concerts in St Martin's Hall.

OPHIS.—The name of the romance of which "Ophis" speaks is *Antar*. It is a Bedoueen romance. We do not remember to have seen any musical settings of *Antar*'s poetical improvisations.

AN ENGLISH MUSICIAN.—"Next week."

NEMO.—Neither the *Redemption* nor the *Messiah* is included in the programme of the Leeds Festival. Will that content the irreconcilables? No; because Liszt's *Christus* is not there, while Mendelssohn's *Elijah* is. Long may it be so. The Leeds people know what is good for them. Perhaps Joachim Raff's *World's End*, *Judgment*, and *New World* (the last especially) may in some degree reconcile the irreconcilables.

EMIR.—No. All the melodies in *La Muette de Portici* are of Auber's own invention; as all the melodies in *Guillaume Tell* are of Rossini's own invention. The wonder is that the French and Italian musicians could weave out of their inner fancy tunes more beautiful and seemingly spontaneous than any wild flowers peeping out from the aboriginal soil.

ANTEATER.—Verdi's opera, *Stiffellio*, was produced at Trieste in the autumn of 1850. The subject of the libretto was borrowed by Piave, (Verdi's frequent collaborateur), from a drama entitled *Stiffellio*, the combined effort of Emile Souvestre and de Bourgeois. Both French drama and Italian Opera were failures; and no wonder. The piece is simply absurd.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1883.

CHERUBINI.

(Continued from page 561.)

Among Cherubini's most ardent admirers must be included Meyerbeer, and we can understand the fact all the more readily because it is easy to discover the points of contact between the genius of these two great men. I cannot say what were exactly their relations to each other, but, from the following letter, the reader will gain a tolerably clear idea of the sentiments of respectful admiration which Meyerbeer entertained for Cherubini:—

"Tuesday.

"DEAR AND ILLUSTRIOS MASTER,—It is impossible for any one to feel more grieved than I am at not being able to attend at two o'clock to-day the Committee appointed for the Adolphe Nourrit Monument. But precisely at the same hour I have a rehearsal of the choruses for the concert to be given in favour of the victims of the Martinique disaster. As I shall probably have several more rehearsals for this concert, I should feel extremely grateful, dear and illustrious Master, if you would kindly fix the next Committee meeting at twelve or one at the latest. However, M. Auber and I have seen M. Duponchel, who granted us with pleasure permission to collect subscriptions in the saloon of the Opera on the nights of

performance. Receive, illustrious master, the expression of the homage and devotion of your constant admirer,

"MEYERBEER."*

I need not now remind the reader of the relations of mutual affection and profound admiration, which, despite the difference of age and the distance between them, united Haydn and Cherubini so closely to each other; I described them when giving an account of the journey Cherubini made to Vienna in 1805, to bring out his *Faniska*. I spoke, also, at the same time, of his relations with Beethoven, and, in reference to this point, I must put the reader on his guard against certain conclusions of Schindler, Beethoven's biographer, who judges Cherubini very stupidly, and attributes to him sentiments regarding the immortal German composer, which were most assuredly never his.† But, in this very book of Schindler's, I find a highly interesting letter written from Vienna by Beethoven to Cherubini, just after the former had finished his Solemn Mass. In it he begs Cherubini to help him in the measures he was taking at the French Court, as at all the other Courts of Europe, to obtain subscriptions, which might enable him to publish his admirable work. Here is the text of the letter taken exactly from the French edition of Schindler's book:—

"Très ESTIMABLE MONSIEUR,—C'est avec grand plaisir que je sais l'occasion de m'approcher de vous par écrit. Depuis longtemps je l'ai fait déjà en pensée et j'estime par dessus tout vos compositions dramatiques. C'est un malheur pour le monde musical que, depuis longues années, on n'ait rien donné de vous, surtout en Allemagne. Si haut que soient estimées vos autres productions, autant c'est une vraie perte pour l'art de ne pas posséder une œuvre de votre génie pour le théâtre. L'art véritable ne passe pas, et un véritable artiste jouit sincèrement des œuvres du génie. Aussi, je ne puis voir sans émotion une nouvelle œuvre de vous; j'y prends une grande part, comme si c'était la mienne propre;—bref je vous aime et vous estime. Sans le triste état de ma santé, j'aurais été vous voir à Paris, et avec quel indicible plaisir j'aurais causé avec vous de l'état de la musique! Ne croyez pas que je vous dise cela comme introduction, étant dans l'intention de vous demander un service. J'espère et je suis convaincu que vous ne me supposez point des sentiments aussi bas.

"Je viens de finir une messe solennelle, et je suis dans l'intention d'envoyer un exemplaire aux principales cours de l'Europe, n'étant pas encore décidé à la faire publier. J'ai adressé, dans ce but, une lettre au roi par l'entremise de l'ambassade de France, pour demander à S. M. l'honneur d'une souscription pour cette œuvre. Je ne doute pas que le roi n'accède à ma prière sur votre recommandation. Ma situation critique demande que je ne fixe pas seulement, comme ordinaire, mes vœux au ciel; au contraire, il faut les fixer aussi en bas pour les nécessités de la vie. Wie es auch ghen mag mit meiner Bitte an sie, ich werde sie dennoch alle zeit lieben und verehren (N'importe ce qu'il adviendra de ma prière, je vous aimerai et vous estimerai toujours) et vous resterai toujours celui de mes contemporains que je l'estime le plus. Si vous me vouliez faire un extrême plaisir, c'était si vous m'écrivez quelques lignes, ce que me soulagera bien. L'art unit tout le monde, et plus encore des vrais artistes, et peut-être vous me dinez aussi de me mettre: auch zu rechnen unter diese zahl (dans ce nombre).

"Avec le plus haut estime,

"Votre ami et serviteur,

"BEETHOVEN."

"GREATLY RESPECTED SIR,—It is with great pleasure that I seize the opportunity of approaching you in writing. I have long done so in thought, and I esteem above everything your dramatic compositions. It is a misfortune for the world of music that for many years nothing of yours has been given, especially in Germany. Highly as your other productions are esteemed, it is a real loss for art not to possess a work of your genius for the stage. True art does not pass away, and a true artist enjoys sincerely works of genius. Consequently, I cannot see without emotion a new work of yours; I

* Here is another letter which Cherubini received from Meyerbeer when the latter was elected associate of the Academy of Fine Arts:—"Dear and illustrious master,—M. Quatremère de Quincy tells me that it is customary for newly-elected associates to wait for the King's approbation before presenting themselves at the Institute, and that not even a letter of thanks ought to be sent to any one before the royal confirmation of the election. Since, then, I shall not have the pleasure of meeting you to-day at the Institute, and as I am off to-morrow, please allow me to thank you once more for all your kindness, and to trust you will sometimes think of me. I beg to present my respects to Madame Cherubini, and am, illustrious Master, your devoted admirer, MEYERBEER."

† See, in connection with this, M. Albert Sowinski's French translation of Schindler's book on Beethoven, pp. 78—81.

take a great interest in it, as though it were my own—in short, I love and esteem you. But for the sad condition of my health, I should have been to see you in Paris, and with what indescribable pleasure I should have talked to you about the state of music! Do not believe that I say this by way of introduction because I am going to ask you to do me a service. I hope and feel convinced you will not impute such mean sentiments to me.

"I have just finished a Solemn Mass and intend sending a copy of it to each of the principal Courts of Europe, as I have not as yet made up my mind to publish it. With this object I have addressed, through the medium of the French Embassy, a letter to the King, asking his Majesty to honour me with a subscription for the work. I have no doubt that, with your recommendation, the King will accede to my prayer. My critical position requires me not only to fix, as usual, my eyes on heaven; on the contrary, I must fix them also here below for the necessities of life. *Wie es auch gehen mag mit meiner Bitte an Sie, ich werde Sie dennoch alle Zeit lieben und verehren* (No matter what may be the result of my request to you, I shall always love and esteem you), and you will always be that one whom I esteem the most among my contemporaries. If you would do me a very great favour, it would be by writing me a few lines; it would solace me greatly. Art unites all men, and still more true artists, and perhaps you may think fit to include me among their number (*auch zu rechnen unter diese Zahl*).

"With the highest esteem,

"Your friend and servant,

"BEETHOVEN."‡

Among the foreign artists who cherished a most profound admiration for Cherubini, we must mention Johann Baptist Cramer, the celebrated German pianist, who, during the long stay he made in Paris, became one of the Master's most intimate friends, and was received in his house on the most affectionate footing. Another artist, also, not less famous, Joseph Dessauer, the excellent Bohemian composer, to whom we owe so many highly original and highly characteristic German songs, became affectionately attached to Cherubini during his visit to Paris in 1832, and, when he returned to Vienna the following year, after an unsuccessful attempt to come out in France as a dramatic composer, Cherubini charged him with a little commission, in connection with which he received from him the charming letter I give below. Being a great collector of autographs, that is: of musical manuscripts written by celebrated artists, Cherubini requested Dessauer, when the latter left Paris, to exert himself in procuring some still wanting in his (Cherubini's) rich collection illustrating German musicians. It was in reference to this that Dessauer sent him the following letter from Vienna:—

"Vienna, the 21st October, 1834.

"SIR,—Immediately you expressed a desire to possess a manuscript of *Marie de Weber* and of *Mich. Haydn*, I made every possible exertion to procure one, but, up to the present, fortune had not seconded my efforts. Fancy my joy, sir, at suddenly finding myself in a position to render you this slight service and forward two very rare autographs. The pieces are *complete* and signed by the composers' own hands. *Weber's variations*—which, I fancy, have never even been engraved—were copied by him for a musician in Prague, who made a present of them to Mr Fuchs, and he gave them to me for you. This gentleman possesses a very rare collection of autographs. He was delighted at being able to be of use to you, and begs you to accept this small present as a mark of the very profound veneration he feels for you and which he shares with the whole musical world.

"Will you render happy this individual whose whole aim is to surround himself with celebrated names? Think of him if there should be a chance of obtaining for him the smallest manuscript of Grétry, Méhul, Isouard, Catel, Dallyrak" (*sic*) "Persuis, Herold, Kreutzer, P. Rode, Boieldieu, Viotti, Henri Herz, Panseron, Ballot" (*sic*) "Adam, J. Rousseau!! You see the list of French composers he does not yet possess is considerable, but no one can help him so well as you, sir, who are at the same time so complaisant and amiable. Should you be able to satisfy one of his requests be kind enough to direct your parcel—which you will give to M. de Saint-Aulaire's secretary in Paris—to the French Embassy, Vienna, addressed to Monsieur de Kiesewetter, Aulic Counsellor, Vienna, for Mr Aloys Fuchs.

"M. Fuchs would feel extremely sorry, if you thought he sends you

‡ Schindler, who visited Paris in 1842, when he had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with Cherubini, was assured by the latter that he never received Beethoven's letter, which, probably, miscarried on the way. At any rate, it was not lost for everyone, since, according to the said Schindler, it is now in the Royal Library, Berlin.

the autographs only to *swap* them, and begs you in no way to put yourself to any inconvenience in hunting up the manuscripts in question.

"Begging you, sir, to present my respects to Madame Cherubini, as well as to all your amiable family, I kiss those hands which have given us so many immortal works, and am, yours, most truly,

"Jos. DESSAUER." §

(To be continued.)

— — —

Dr Blidge in the flesh.

"If there's a hole in a' your coats,

I rede you tent it:

A child's amang you takin' notes,

And, faith, he'll print it."

—BURNS.



—
Lazz.

In Editorial Sanctum.

DR BLIDGE (ruminating).—Beard goes to-day for a fortnight's holiday to Builth Wells, and Mr Peters appoints me his *locum tenens* for the time. They say I'm mad—but I will show them,

§ Aloys Fuchs, mentioned in this letter, occupied an important position in the War Office, Vienna. He was an enthusiastic dilettante, and had received a good musical education. He formed the acquaintance of the greatest artists in the Austrian capital, and made a very fine collection of manuscripts and autographs, of which a catalogue has been published. Thanks to Dessauer, Cherubini doubtless put himself in direct communication with Fuchs; for I have before me a memorandum written by the latter in Italian, and dated the 28th December, 1836, giving a list of a series of autographs sent by him to the old Master: *Elenco di pezzi autografi musicali, spediti da Aloysio Fuchs di Vienna al signore Cherubini a Parigi.* The list contains fourteen autograph manuscripts of Antonio Caldara, Gassmann, Wagenseil, Salieri, Albrechtsberger, Max Stadler, Hugo Worzischeck, Wranitzky, Gyrowetz, Seyfried, Ch. Ph. Emm. Bach, Adam Hiller, Eberhard Müller, and Franz Schubert.

though less Hamlet than Polonius, that there is method in my madness. Go to! Some of 'em shall cry "Chalk!" or my name's not Blidge—John Blidge Blidge. Ha! ha! my doughty bladesmen. You shall spot the vistor as he strides with menace to the tune of King Arthur's Battle-Song. (Sings):—

*Deomp, deomp, deomp, deomp, deomp, d'ar gad!
Deomp, kar, deomp, breur, deomp, map, deomp, tad!
Deomp, deomp, deomp holl, deomp-ta, tud vad!*

Then let the slave who cries "Ham!" beware. Stop—here's a letter. Wonder what it's about. Armorial bearings, too. (Breaks open seal, and reads):—"So you're among 'em, are you, old Taunton Dundreary?" (Sings):—

"Deomp, deomp —— tud vad!"

Look out for squalls! Here's another. It's from that "English Musician" (not he of the Clarendon Hotel, Birmingham) who is incessantly imploring my opinion about the *Redemption*. There! (Drops letter into basket). I have no opinion on the matter; if I had I should help myself first, and not communicate my experience to demi-demented misanthropes. No. I have Siegmund's *Schwertfahrt* in pickle. Yet another! I am tired of these communications. I wonder Beard don't make a bonfire of the lot as they are placed in his hands. (Rings a side-bell).

Enter DEVIL.

DR BLIDGE.—Bring me a *Schwertmotiv*. No—I mean a *Flaschenmotiv*.

DEVIL.—What, sir?

DR BLIDGE.—No, I mean a brandy and soda motive. My head aches of these letters. Now I shall be able to reflect leisurely on my actual position and prospects. First, I'll telephone F. C. B. I'll catch him before, Amfortas-like, he takes his matutinal bath. (Telephones F. C. B.):—

Supposing I am made Editor, will you stick to the pledge you gave D. Peters at the Service Tree and Sable, and combine our papers under the name and title of "The Musical World's Punch"?

(Answer from F. C. B. by telephone):—

Cert'nly, Colonel, under the name and title of "Punch's Musical World." It is a bore to go to Lancaster every week.

DR BLIDGE.—Bravo! Better than nothing, if that pettifogging old Beard don't interfere.

Enter DEVIL.

DEVIL.—Soda and brandy, sir ——

DR BLIDGE.—I asked for brandy and soda?

DEVIL.—Brandy and soda, sir—with more letters. Master says, "Pity our copyless condition." We have had nothing since you came here.

DR BLIDGE (angrily).—Confound the nature of things! (Opens a letter.) Here's that "Phosphor," once more complaining of glare and heat, want of silence on the part of the attendants, recommending noisy people to pass under an archway, and informing us that, though *Stiffelio* is his last opera, Verdi still retains the power "to write broad melodies." I should think so. *Aida*, composed years after *Stiffelio*, is a proof. There! (baskets.) Per Hercle! (Opens another letter.) Here's a man—signature, "Country Organist"—who asks what I think of *Sennacherib*, *St Mary Magdalen*, the *Elegiac Symphony*, and "The Glories of our Blood and State," at the Gloucester Festival! I won't be bothered with such questions. I hate people who are for ever asking what you think. That's no business of theirs. Away with it! (baskets.) And now—No, by Scissors!—here's another (opens last letter). Oh! letter from Bayreuth (reads aloud):—"Gross, it is said, has commenced negotiations with all persons to whom Wagner wrote any letters, with a view to their publication should they contain aught which it would be advisable not to give to the world—for the present, at any rate." This must signify that all of Wagner's letters which contain things it would be advisable not to publish will be published. Good! Here goes (baskets). And now for a draught (drinks). All right, Devil. Cut your two-sticks.

DEVIL.—Shall I take the copy?

DR BLIDGE.—Blow copy! Say there's none at present (exit DEVIL). And now, I think, I have done a good day's work. I shall be in time for the ordinary at the Eel and Carpenter. By the way, who the deuce is Gross?

Loud knocking at door. Enter DR BEARD.



DR BEARD (*furiously*).—You mumbling old impostor!—Who's Gross, indeed! Peters must have been *non compos* when he chose you to represent me during my holiday. I was on the point of starting when I chanced to look in at the office, and found that not a scrap of copy had been sent. I have come purposely to remind you of it. Who's Gross? Aye, who's Gross?—you empty ignoramus?

DR BLIDGE.—Get out, infuriate cipher, ancient braggadocio! You have no business here. It is my sanctum for the period.

DR BEARD.—What?—infatuated zebra! I will have you dislodged before I go. Who's Gross? To think that Peters might have had the choice of such men as Queer and Silent. However, you will quit this room in less than an hour, and so make the best of it—infated, pompous, decrepit humbug! (Exit DR BEARD, *swathed in anger*.)

DR BLIDGE.—A good riddance! I'd rather write a whole number myself than cram it with such platitudes as I have basketed. He'll get me out! Will he? (Takes door key, and locks door after him). Who, by the way, is Gross? I don't know, but can easily get C. L. to do a portrait of him. (At bottom of staircase encounters DEVIL). You here again? What's up?

DEVIL.—Copy, Sir. We have none, and master foams at the mouth.

DR BLIDGE.—Let him foam! Be off! I am master here. (Exit DEVIL). And now for the ordinary. I hunger. I shall enjoy my dinner. Who's Gross?—Who's Gross? What's it to me? I'll serve that old mongrel, Beard, as he merits. I'll serve him *out*. (Chuckles inwardly at his own joke). I'll abuse the mind of Peters. Who's Gross? (Exit *venomously* to Eel and Carpenter).

At the Eel and Carpenter.

DR BLIDGE (to head-carver).—I say—I've done a good piece of work to-day. (Mock-turtle brought in. DR BLIDGE falls to.) When at table I am Fafner and Fasolt in one.



Deump, deump —— tud vad!

Who's Gross?

MR CHARLES LYALL.—In speaking of the new operatic touring party mentioned in our last, it is stated that Mr Charles Lyall was one of the company. That is true; but he is not expected to attend the whole series of "provincial" performances. It is only from time to time, on special occasions, that Mr Lyall will join in them. He abandons "touring" altogether; and no wonder, considering how long he has been in harness, and how arduously he has laboured. The great pity is, that so consummate an artist, and so great a favourite of the public, should be comparatively lost to our lyric stage.

The Abbe Liszt has returned to Weimar, from Leipzig, where he went to hear the first performance of Berlioz's opera, *Benvenuto Cellini*, which Liszt himself was first to revive after its successive failures in Paris and London; this, too, in the comparatively small theatre of a comparatively small city where Goethe loved to dwell.

VIOLIN MAKERS' MARKS.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR.—The information required by the managing editor of the *Burnley Express and Advertiser* may be easily found in *Sandy and Forster's History of the Violin*, published by J. R. Smith, Soho Square; but apart from this it would require the services of an expert to decide whether the instruments were genuine or only imitations. Yours faithfully,

"AUCTIO."

September 10th.



(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR.—In answer to your correspondent's enquiry for information as regards Stainer violins, I beg to give the following particulars. The violins by this famous maker are covered with an amber varnish of a reddish yellow colour, the edges are very strong and rounded, the purfling narrow, the sound holes rather short and beautifully formed, the upper and lower turns of the same being perfectly circular. Stainer's labels were never printed, but written as follows: "Jacobus Stainer in absom prope Anipontum n. sis 16."

I need hardly say that genuine Jacob Stainer violins are exceedingly rare, and their tone is harsher and shriller than other old instruments by great makers. For further interesting and exhaustive particulars I would refer the enquirer to Otto's well-known book on the violin, a translation of which is published, and may be had of Messrs. R. Cocks & Co.

W. A. J.

September 12th.



(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR.—In reply to your enquiry respecting the above, Stainer Violins are high model, fine varnish, (light brown or yellow), and good workmanship. Sometimes Duke stamped his violins on the back.—Yours faithfully

EDWARD WITHERS.

22, Wardour Street, September 12.

"MOMA PATTI's engagement next month"—says 'Cherubino'—"with Messrs Harrison & Harrison, for concerts at Birmingham and Manchester, is at the absurdly low rate of £500 per concert, or rather less than £170 a song! How can a struggling *prima donna* exist on such starvation rates?" (*Credat Iudeus—non ego*.—Dr Blinge.)

M. GOUNOD, we are informed, is completely absorbed in the new sacred work he has been commissioned to write for the Birmingham Festival of 1885. He may well have felt surprised (as were others besides himself) at the enthusiastic reception accorded to his *Redemption* by the people of Birmingham, for whom Mendelssohn composed *Elijah*; and, "to his credit be it said," he has abandoned secular opera for a higher sphere of musical aspiration.—*Graphic*.

MR DUTTON COOK.—We regret to record the death of Mr Dutton Cook, the dramatic critic, which occurred suddenly on Tuesday, at his residence, in Gloucester Crescent, Regent's Park. The deceased gentleman, son of Mr George Simon Cook, solicitor, of London, and formerly of Grantham, Lincolnshire, was born in the year 1832. He was educated at King's College, London, and served articles in the office of his father with the view of following the legal profession. Mr Cook, however, turned his attention to art and literature, and, having studied painting and engraving, at one time sought employment on *Punch* as a draughtsman on wood. From 1868 to 1871 he was engaged as assistant editor of the *Cornhill Magazine*, and from 1871 till 1875 he filled the post of dramatic critic to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, since which time he has been attached in that capacity to the *World* newspaper. Mr Cook was the author of numerous articles on art topics in various reviews, newspapers, and periodicals, and published several works of fiction.—*Times*. Mr Cook married the accomplished pianist, Miss Linda Scates, a student in our Royal Academy of Music, to which she was in every way a credit. On her marriage with Mr Cook she relinquished the public exercise of her profession.

MR STEPHEN S. STRATTON announces that his fifth season of "Popular Chamber Concerts" will commence in October, at the Masonic Hall, Birmingham. A feature at these concerts will be the performance of works by English musicians, including compositions by the late F. E. Bache, F. H. Cowen, Edward Sharp, C. A. Mackenzie, Thomas Anderton, and Dr Swinerton Heap.

LEEDS TOWN HALL ORGAN.

The Leeds Town Hall organ was "re-opened" by the Borough organist on the occasion of a free concert. During the last two months the instrument has been in the hands of its builders, Messrs Gray & Davison, who, after thoroughly renovating and improving it, have once more handed it over to the Corporation a model of completeness and an object of pride to the town. The organ is just as old as the building in which it stands, having been erected in 1858 by Messrs Gray & Davison, from designs furnished by the late Mr Henry Smart and the present borough organist, Dr Spark. Some idea of the extent of the work which has been accomplished during the last few weeks may be gathered from the size of the instrument. It has four manuals, the compass of each of which is from CC to C in *altissimo*, 61 notes, and a pedal organ from CCC to F, 30 notes. There are 118 stops, besides seventeen composition and other pedals; the organ containing 6,500 pipes, dependant on miles of wire, trackers, and connecting rods. Variations of temperature, and other vicissitudes to which such instruments are subject, had resulted in serious internal decay. Besides general repairs, tuning, and cleaning, the work which it was found necessary to undertake comprised the readjustment of coupling movements, new throttle valves in connection with the pneumatic apparatus, separate reservoir and trunking for the pedal action, separate sound board for each of the two central towers of the 32ft. metal pipes, new tracker work, the substitution of phosphor bronze wires for the old wires, new metal squares for wooden ones, and other improvements. As the work progressed, alterations beside those specified in the contract with the builders were found necessary. Messrs Gray & Davison generously executed them without further charge. Careful treatment has been bestowed upon the draw stop action, and additional wind power has been applied to the 32ft. metal pedal stop, thereby imparting better tone than formerly. The touch of the organ has also been regulated and improved. An idea of the attention which has been paid to matters of detail may be gathered from the fact that miles of fresh wire and no less than 3,000 new metal "squares" have been supplied. The engines and bellows have been overhauled and repaired by Mr Woodward, engineer, of this town, and a careful examination has been instituted by Mr John Barber, C.E., who rendered valuable service in a difficulty which occurred in respect to the water supply. The estimated cost of the improvements contemplated in the original contract between the Corporate Property Committee and the builders was £700.—*Leeds Mercury*.



MR IRVING AT EDINBURGH.

An event of high importance to the theatrical portion of the Edinburgh community took place in the "Modern Athens" on Saturday night. This was the opening of the new Lyceum Theatre in Grindly Street, and the appearance in Edinburgh of Mr Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry, prior to their departure for America. An audience numbering nearly 3,000 spectators crowded every part of the building, and applauded every point in the performance. The chief feature of the programme was, of course, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and when Mr Irving stepped upon the stage attired as Benedick, he was greeted with cheers that were literally echoed and re-echoed. A warm welcome likewise awaited Miss Ellen Terry, who charmed every one by her enchanting impersonation of Beatrice. Mr Irving has never acted Benedick with a better result, or sustained it more brilliantly. Indeed, the whole went capitally. When the curtain had fallen, Mr Irving, in response to loud and enthusiastic calls, stepped before the curtain and delivered a speech, in which he gracefully spoke of his connection with Edinburgh twenty-five years previously, and complimented the managers upon the possession of their handsome theatre. In the *foyer* adjoining the dress circle there were placed busts of Miss Ellen Terry and Mr Henry Irving.—M. T.

PROVINCIAL.

GLASGOW.—The Glasgow City Hall Concerts give the first performance of their thirtieth season to-day. The far more important concerts under the direction of Mr August Manns, which have made Glasgow a musical city, promising ere long to vie with Manchester, begin a month or so later on. The regretted death of the enthusiastic Glasgow amateur, Mr J. H. Stillie, happily came too late to arrest the progress of a scheme for the early establishment and gradual advance of which he laboured with such untiring zeal and energy. At various periods, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Dr Hans von Bülow, and Mr Manns have been directors-in-chief of this institution, the periodical concerts of which are now on the high road to prosperity.

BLACKPOOL.—The extra concert of the Winter Gardens on Saturday night, the 1st inst., drew one of the largest audiences of the season, the Pavilion being crowded in every part, in addition to the large number who thronged the promenade. The great attraction was Mr Joseph Maas, a vocalist who has risen rapidly in public estimation, and who now stands in the front rank among our great English tenors. That Mr Maas has made rapid strides in his profession of late, all who listened to his superb singing on Saturday night will be prepared to admit. In splendid voice, he spared no effort, and for each of his songs received an ovation of the most flattering character. Mr Maas's songs were "The Message," "When other lips," and "The Pilgrim of love," and in response to enthusiastic re-calls, he favoured the audience with "Good night, beloved," and "Come into the garden, Maud." For his exquisite rendering of these he was as warmly applauded as for those down for him in the programme, and from first to last it was evident that in the engagement of this famous tenor the management had made a decided hit. Mdme Alice Barth was in excellent form, and for "Ah, fors è lui," sung in her best style, as well as for "Killarney," she met with a very favourable reception. The efficient service rendered by the band also met with due recognition at the hands of the audience. If we except the selection from the *Faust* of Berlioz, there was, however, little that was new among the instrumental selections. Yet, despite the fact that "The British Patrol" and "The Forge in the Forest" have been performed many times at these concerts, the former was unanimously encored, and the latter narrowly escaped a similar compliment. The selection from *Iolanthe*, arranged by M. Riviere, is always a treat, and it has never been better given. In fact, the popularity of the band increases, as also does that of its conductor, to whom not a little of the success of the evening was due. To Mdme Frost, who accompanied the songs, considerable praise is also due.—Monday night's concert, with Mr Joseph Maas, Miss Jessie Royd, and Mdme Jenny Pratt as vocalists, was no less successful. This was especially the case in relation to Mr Maas's singing of "The Death of Nelson" which was followed by loud and continued cheering. Twice Mr Maas came out and bowed his acknowledgments, but the applause could only be allayed by another song. This was, "Let me like a soldier fall," from Vincent Wallace's *Maritana*, the rendering of which was characterized by a fervour only equalled by that with which a few minutes before he had sung "The Death of Nelson." In conclusion, the concerts of Saturday and Monday at the Winter Gardens will rank among the musical successes of the Blackpool season—no little of the credit of which justly falls to Mr Morgan, the manager.—*Abridged from the "Blackpool Times," Sept. 5, 1883.*

NEWARK—ORGAN RE-OPENING.—On Thursday, September 6, the organ of St. Leonard's Church, which has undergone extensive alterations, was re-opened, and a special service was held. There was a crowded congregation. In addition to the organ the band of the Yeomanry Cavalry, under the direction of Bandmaster Lilley, played selections of sacred music. The Rev. Stacey Chapman, the vicar, having determined to have an organ worthy of the church, and funds being forthcoming, the work of rebuilding was entrusted to Messrs Harston & Sons, of Newark. They have added a swell organ with nine stops, with three additional couplers. The cost of the alteration is about £150, and the work has been carried out most satisfactorily. The new stops are:—1.—Lieblich Bourdon (wood) 16 ft. CCC to G. 2.—Lieblich Gedact (metal) Sft. CC to G. 3.—Giegen Principal (metal) Sft. G to G. 4.—Voix Céleste (metal) 8ft. C to G. 5.—Flute Harmonique (metal) 4ft. CC to G. 6.—Mixture (3 Ranks) (metal) various CC to G. 7.—Cornopeon (metal) 8ft. CC to G. 8.—Hautboys (metal) 8ft. CC to G. 9.—Clarion (metal) 4ft. CC to G. 10.—Swell to Great. 11.—Swell to Great sub. 12.—Swell to Pedals. The services commenced with the Processional Hymn. "We march, we march to victory," the same that was sung at the choral festival at Southwell Minster. The band, after the third collect, played "Pro Peccatis" from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. Mr W. Drury, R.A.M., presided at the organ, and played an "Andante Cantabile" by Mozart and "Cujus Animam," from the *Stabat Mater*. The sermon was preached by the Rev. F. V. Bussell,

vicar of Balderton. After the sermon Mr Drury played Batiste's "Offertoire in D Minor," and the band followed with "O Salutaris." The proceedings throughout were most successful.—*Nottingham Guardian.*

CARDIFF.—The adjudicators did not agree as to which of the thirteen competitors on the poem "Llandaff," at the recent National Eisteddfod of Wales, the prize of twenty-one guineas and a gold medal should be given. The committee, therefore, appointed the Rev. W. Glanfrwd Thomas to arbitrate in the matter. His decision is to be final. We understand that the rev. gentleman has communicated his decision to the Eisteddfod Committee at Cardiff. It was not revealed to the arbitrator to which of the poems the judges had decided to give the prize. The decision is awaited with considerable interest. The adjudication written by Mr Thomas is to be published in full. The poem, according to his decision, for which the prize is to be given, is signed "Cyfeiliawg," and is written in English.

BRIGHTON.—At the Aquarium concert last Saturday (Sept. 8) the vocalists were Misses Clara Samuell, Agnes Larkcom, and Damian; Messrs Henry Piercy and Maybrick, assisted by Mr Sidney Naylor (pianist), and the band of the Institution, conducted by Mr Jacques Greebe. The successes of the concert were Blumenthal's duet "The Venetian Boat Song," (Misses Clara Samuell and Damian); "The Little Hero," and "Three Merry Men," (Mr Maybrick); Mr Sidney Naylor rendering two pianoforte compositions—"Rococo" by Zaverthal, and "La Reconnaissance" by Wehli—and the performance by the band of Weber's overture to *Oberon*.—The Military Promenade Concert at the Royal Pavilion on the same afternoon was as successful as those which had preceded it, the company being large and highly fashionable. The following compositions were played under the direction of Mr T. Martin:—Grand March, *Tannhauser*; Overture to *Masaniello*; Valse, "Schlummerlied"; "Reminiscences of Haydn"; "Apollo" Mazurka; Valse, "A Foi"; Terpsichoreana, Potpourri of National Dances; and "The Jolly Bachelor" Galop.

MALVERN.—ORGAN RECITAL.—Mr W. Haynes, the organist of the Priory Church, played the following compositions on Wednesday, September 5. Although most of our musical people were attracted to the festival at Gloucester, there was a large attendance, and those present seemed to thoroughly appreciate the manner in which they were rendered:—Allegro Maestoso (Mozart), Pastorale in A flat and Andante in E (Sir Sterndale Bennett), Offertoire in A minor (Batiste), Andante in D, Quartet No. 5 (Mozart), Scherzoso in G minor, Sonata in D minor (Battison Haynes), Air in B flat, varied (Hiles), and Organ Fantasia in G (Guilmant).

LIVERPOOL (correspondence).—The Carl Rosa Opera Company has been fulfilling a very remunerative engagement. Besides the inevitable *Faust*, *Maritana* and *Bohemian Girl*, which will persist in tickling the ears and stirring the hearts of those whom the "advanced people, contemners of rhythmic melody, estimate as little better than "gone coons," Mr Rosa has wisely introduced the two striking novelties brought out during his recent brief season at Drury Lane. *Esmeralda* and *Colomba* have both been given at the Alexandra Theatre; and let it be added, with well-merited success. The opera by Mr Goring Thomas was, for evident reasons, quickest to take the public; but that of Mr Mackenzie, though by slower degrees, has thoroughly established its claim to equal honours. No two works could differ more materially from one another, while each has found its way to public approval. The careful and satisfactory manner in which both are placed upon the stage, and the generally efficient style of their execution, under the direction of Mr Goossens, are doubtless in some measure accountable for this; but the main fact is that in either instance the music has pleased, and is likely to please for some time hence. The leading characters in both operas are sustained by the regular members of Mr Rosa's company, Mdme Georgina Burns (the Filina of the company) being the Esmeralda, and Mdme Marie Roze (vice the original, Mdme Valleria) Colomba. Mr Barton McGuckin has been doing excellent service, not only as Captain Phœbus in *Esmeralda*, and the Corsican hero in *Colomba*, but in *Faust* and other operas. He is rapidly making way.

The tenth season of Pollini's management at the Hamburg Stadttheater commenced on the 1st inst., when the subscription list amounted to upwards of 500,000 marks, a larger sum than was ever subscribed before.

DRESDEN.—In place of bringing out an ordinary spectacular piece at Christmas, according to long established custom, the management of the Theatre Royal contemplates reviving Lortzing's *Undine*, with new dresses, scenery, and appointments, the old ones having been destroyed when the former theatre was burnt down in 1860.

COVENT GARDEN PROMENADE CONCERTS.

Mr Gwylym Crowe pursues his way with steady and deserved success. At his "Classical Concert" on Wednesday night the theatre was as crowded as on any previous occasion. The first ("classical") section of the programme began with Mendelssohn's enchanting music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which was played right well, and listened to with the never-failing interest by those who came to listen at all, and not (*pace* "Phosphor") to crack bottles and make unseemly noises. Miss Hilda Coward (daughter of James Coward, so many years organist-elect at the Crystal Palace) then sang "With verdure clad" in the simple, unaffected manner which should always accompany the delivery of such placid melody. Madame Frickenhaus then gave Beethoven's Third Pianoforte Concerto (C minor), with great vigour and fluency, introducing, in the first movement (according to a custom better honoured in the breach than the observance), an elaborate *cadenza* by—any one in general and no one in particular. Madame Frickenhaus, at her best, especially in the first movement, won the applause due to her artistic exertions. A "vocalist" followed, and that "vocalist" being Joseph Maas, no one will be surprised to hear that he obtained the unanimous approval of the house, even for a recitative and air not of the liveliest character from Gounod's *La Reine de Saba*—or *Irène*, as it is known at the "Palace made of windows." He was twice called back, though happily deaf to *encores*. Bravo, Joseph Maas! Mr Viotti Collins, "by desire" (of Mr Gwylym Crowe?) played Beethoven's "Romance" in F, for violin, so ably and with such good taste, that, for once in a way, we should like to hear him play the same composer's "Romance" in G (No. 2). Miss Ellen D'Alton came next, with an expressive reading of Gounod's somewhat hackneyed "Quando a ti lieta," one of the interpolated airs in *Faust* (which cost the London publishers £80); and the first part ended, triumphantly, with a spirited performance of Beethoven's magnificent C minor Symphony—a feast to musical ears at all times. About the second part it must suffice to add, that it began with Donizetti's rambling overture to *Les Martyrs* (Donizetti never could write a fairly-balanced overture), in which the band of the Coldstream Guards took part; included a very effective "selection" from Frederick Clay's *Merry Duchess*, by Mr Hamilton Clark, the excellent performance of which was conducted by the composer himself; and other pieces, which, however popular, need not be described.

PASDELOUP AND ENGLISH MUSIC.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—I hear that Pasdeloup's "Concerts Populaires" in Paris are to be resumed on the 21st of October. Will their talented and highly-respected director ever condescend to introduce to the public one of the overtures of an English musician whose name was Sterndale Bennett? He has never yet done so; nor has M. Colonne, nor M. Lamoureux, nor the "Conservatoire!" And yet we play French overtures, French operas, French all sorts of things, here, and some of them not of the best. I am aware that M. Pasdeloup is a Wagnerite and Lisztite to the extremest rib; but that makes no difference. Surely the tranquil, broad and lucid *Naiads* would not hurt either him or his audience at a pinch. After so much of the *Ercles* vein, it might act as a wholesome sedative; and that would not be amiss. What say you, Mr Editor? Obediently,

Crutch and Toothpick, Sept. 12.

LAVENDER PITT.

[Have we not Hiram here? and are et-ceteras nothing? Consult Sir Caper O'Corby of the Shileagh.—Mr Glidge.]

HENRY FIELDING.

(To the Editor of the "Morning Post.")

SIR,—I have read to-day with considerable interest your article on the illustrious author of "the first of English novels." For the most part your critical remarks strike me as being exceptionally fair and candid, but when you assert that *Tom Jones* is not fit "for general reading" and that "it is not the book any man would willingly have lying on his drawing-room table," I must beg leave to enter my humble protest. The influence of Fielding is unquestionably good, and if any passages occur in his works which are not

agreeable to our 19th century tastes we must remember that, as we are told in the first chapter of *Tom Jones*, the bill of fare which he presents to his readers contains simply "human nature"—served up in every form with which he was familiar. A novel depicting only the good and virtuous side of life would be insipid and unreadable, and would resemble a picture painted in one colour with a disregard for all chiaroscuro. Moreover, there is always a moral underlying Fielding's descriptions of vicious life—an unpointed moral, doubtless; but all the more effective on that account. Coleridge has said of *Tom Jones*:—"A young man whose heart or feelings can be injured, or even his passions excited, by this novel, is already thoroughly corrupt." Only a few days ago I took up a copy of one of Fielding's works from a drawing-room table, and was informed by my hostess that she was herself reading it. I have heard it said that someone asked Carlyle whether he thought a lady should read Fielding, and his answer was an emphatic "Certainly." If, sir, we begin "Boycotting" those authors whose works happen to contain passages calculated to offend the very susceptible minds of prudish and mock-modest young women, where are we to stop? Chaucer, Shakspere—in fact, all that we most reverence in literature must be swept from our drawing-room tables, and consequently from our household libraries. The fact is, Fielding has been too long neglected, except by a certain class of readers. Until recently the great body of students of English literature have hardly recognized the extraordinary merits of *Tom Jones*, which one may almost call an "epic of human nature." The philosophical disquisitions distributed throughout his works, and especially those imitable essays which form the first chapter in each book of *Tom Jones* (and which, I find, the ordinary novel reader prefers to skip), are most instructive and unique. Fielding, like Shakspere and Goethe (and a few others between), saw right into men's hearts, and he shows us not only what were the lines and actions of certain men and women, but helps us to understand why they acted as they did. The common herd of novel writers show us, so to speak, the face of the clock; Fielding lays before us all the complicated mechanism which was concealed behind it. In conclusion, be so good, sir, as to allow me to inform those of your readers who may be interested in any relics of Harry Fielding that if in their holiday rambles they should pass through Taunton, they will find in the Somerset Archaeological Society's Museum at the Castle, an old oak table which belonged to our great novelist, and at which possibly the greater part of his works were written.—Apologising for the length of this letter, I am, sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY E. DUDENEY.

September 5.

[Mr Dudeneys should read *The Humourists of Thackeray*—Fielding's only equal—and admire what the immortal author of *Pendennis* and *The Newcomes* says about the immortal author of *Amelia* and *Jonathan Wild*. Fielding could not pourtray women after nature, as Thackeray drew them. Sophia and Fanny (*Tom Jones* and *Joseph Andrews*) are mere abstractions, the one quality of each being constancy to a handsome and manly young fellow. *Amelia* is the best. Look at Thackeray's heroines, *Amelia* (*Vanity Fair*), Helen Pendennis, Beatrice (*Esmond*), Ethel Newcome, &c. How different from each other and yet (like Shakspere's heroines) what veritable types of womanhood. *Unquestionably*, Thackeray is the foremost of English novelists.—D. B.]

SCRAPS FROM GERMANY.

(From our Teutonic Correspondent.)

WEIMAR.—Early next year 1884 there will be held a Jubilee of the Society of German musicians, intended for the help and relief of aged musicians, under the presidency of Franz Liszt and the Grand Duke which will be no doubt numerously attended, at the same time with the celebration of the Schiller Association society—Poetry & music combined.

MANHEIM.—Madame Trebelli (perhaps a daughter of the celebrated Madame Trebelli) has been singing *Carmen*, with great success in (german) at the Opera house.

Hans Makert has written a *Cycleus* of new sketches on the *Nibelungen*, which will shortly be published.

MAYENCE.—The town theatre celebrates its 50 years existence on the 21 September—it was opened in 1833 and is one of the handsomest buildings of the time it was built fire proof having large stone stairs throughout and Exits on all sides. All European stars have appeared in it, from the past to the present. Many changes have taken place in the direction of it, and it has always been in advance in novelties. Every great work even the most difficult have there been performed—with small means. Amongst the great musician that conducted the Opera was Kapelmeister Adolph Ganz—highly respected even now, through his talent, zeal & Energy.

He brought the Mainzer Oper twice to London, and had an immense success, but the third visit, under Director Schumann, was unsuccessful and then Kapelmeister Ganz remained in London, where he introduced his youngest son Wilhelm to the music loving public. The Opera performed on the 21st is *Titus*, the same with which the Operahouse was opened.

—o—

BERLIN.

(Correspondence.)

The following will be the cast of *Die Walküre* at the Royal Operahouse: Siegmund, Niemann; Wotan, Betsch; Hunding, Fricke; Sieglinde, Sachse-Hofmeister; and Brünnhilde, Voggenhuber. As yet no representative has been found for Fricka.—The children of Jean Becker, the head of the whilom celebrated Florentine quartet, founded last winter a Becker trio, but, though very successful, they have already dissolved it, the reason assigned being that Jeanne Becker, their pianist, intends settling in this capital.—It is probable, according to the *Montagzeitung*, that the promised Italian season which was to commence on the 16th inst at the Victoria Theater, may not come off after all, owing to the inability of the manager, Merelli, to obtain an efficient chorus. Should he succeed, however, the first opera will be Verdi's *Ernani*, with Medea Borelli as Elvira, and Gianini, as Ernani. Negotiations are pending with Trebelli.

—o—

WAIFS.

SIR MICHAEL COSTA.—We are informed that Sir Michael Costa, whose general health is all that could be desired, has made up his mind to seek complete recovery by means of a prolonged sojourn on the Continent—most likely in his own native land, under the sunny clime of which he first saw the light. Meanwhile he has sent his card, with "P. P. C." to his intimate friends, who, whatever temporary home he may select, will wish him "God speed!" and the fullest realization of his wishes.

Mr Henry Irving has accepted an invitation to dine with the Art Club of Liverpool on October 4th.

A report comes from America that the Academy have refused to endorse the Patti contract for more than £400 per night. Such a step would be very proper next year, but this season it is not likely to be taken. While the negotiations with Mr Abbey were pending, a party of American stockholders met and volunteered to back the contract, on the faith of which Mr Mapleson signed it.—CHERUBINO. (*Credat Apella—ego non.*—Dr Blinge.)

The Milan Scala is to be lighted by electricity.

Marie Wilt and Papier are in Prague. (The dears!—Dr Blinge.)

Manzotti's ballet, *Excelsior*, has been as successful in Madrid as elsewhere.

Mdme Christine Nilsson leaves Paris for New York in the course of next week.

Mrs Langtry reached Paris on Saturday, and will repose there for a month or six weeks.

Angelo Gaviani, professor of the violin, has been created Knight of the Crown of Italy.

Herr Francesco Berger and Mdme Berger-Lascelles are making a round of visits in Scotland.

Tamberlik's Italian-opera company closed their short season at Vigo with a performance of *Ernani*.

Moran-Olden concluded a short engagement at the Leipsic Stadttheater by appearing as Leonore in *Fidelio*.

A so-called "Estudiantina Espanola" is making a concert-tour in Italy, with anything but satisfactory results.

The autumn season at the Teatro Comunale, Bologna, will be inaugurated with Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*.

The inauguration of the monument to the late Baron Taylor in Père-Lachaise will not take place till next year.

Mr and Mrs Beattie Kingston have gone to Florence on a visit to the distinguished tragedian, Signor Ernest Rossi.

Varesi, who chose *Lucia* for her first appearance at the Theatre Royal, Copenhagen, met with a flattering reception.

The first opera performed at the Stadttheater, Bremen, under Angelo Neumann's management was Gluck's *Armida*.

A children's buffo opera has lately been the attraction at Mercedes (Spain). The "Diva," Clotilde Fernandez, is five years old.

T. E. Nessler's new opera, *Jung Werter, der Trompeter von Sükkingen*, is to be produced in November at the Stadttheater, Leipzig.

The new ballet of *Sakuntala*, to be produced shortly at the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna, is in five tableaux and will fill up the evening.

Paul Mestrozi, the new *Capellmeister* at the Theater in der Josephstadt, Vienna, entered on his functions by conducting the folk's-piece, *Die Türken vor Wien*.

Ponchielli is giving the last touches to an opera founded on Victor Hugo's *Marion Delorme*, after which he at once commences another, entitled *Janko*.

The title of Royal Prussian *Musikdirector* has been conferred on Theobald Rehbann, of Berlin, composer of several operas, for which he himself wrote the libretto.

Gran, formerly of Hanover, is appointed conductor at the Theater an der Wien, Vienna, in place of Adolf Müller, junr., who has gone in the same capacity to Rotterdam.

During a rehearsal of *Die Götterdämmerung* at the Theatre Royal, Munich, Mdme Vogl fell with the horse she was riding and, though not dangerously injured, was very much shaken.

Mr Oberthür has returned from his successful professional tour in Germany and Austria, and is now, with his *cara sposa* and little "Miss Mischief," inhaling the sea breezes at Weston-super-Mare.

The Emperor of Austria has conferred the title of Imperial Austrian Chamber-Singer on von Biggio, who will shortly leave the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna, for the Hungarian National Theatre, Pesth.

M. Damala and Mdme Sarah Bernhardt have, happily, separated "à l'amiable." M. Damala has quitted the army, which did not suit his taste, and returns to the stage, where he does not suit the taste of the public.

The Annual Festival of the Church Choir Association is to be held in St Paul's Cathedral early in November. The Archbishop of Canterbury, with the Bishops of London, St Alban's, and Rochester, have become patrons.

The long-existing theatre at Carlsbad is to be demolished next month, and a more commodious edifice erected on its site. Recent precautions for the public safety, now being adopted far and wide, will, of course, be taken into grave consideration.

More fires in theatres! The *Theatr Rozmaitosci*, at Warsaw, was recently burnt to the ground. The pecuniary loss is estimated at 100,000 roubles; but, happily, the catastrophe was not aggravated by loss of life to any one connected with the establishment.

The rehearsals of the new opera for the Savoy have already begun, under the direction of Mr W. S. Gilbert. The title is not decided upon. Sir Arthur Sullivan is at Doncaster, *en attendant* the Leeds Festival. Shall we have a "patter" song for Mr Grossmith on the St Leger race? (Happy thought.—Dr Blinge.)

On account of certain allusions to dynamite and other implements in vogue among modern conspirators, certain portions of Strauss's *buffo* opera, *Prinz Methusalem*, have been struck out by the "censure" at St Petersburg, much to the detriment, it would appear, of the third and liveliest act. Its continued success is thereby rendered doubtful.

Paul Siraudin, the dramatic author, died recently of apoplexy by which he was attacked about a fortnight ago. He was born in Paris in 1812, and in the course of his life had worked either alone or with others, at no fewer than eighty theatrical pieces, in various styles. Perhaps the best of these was *Le Misanthrope et l'Avvergnat*, written thirty-one years ago. Siraudin is best known in England as one of the three authors, the others being Clairville and Koning, of *La Fille de Madame Angot*. His mother was attached to the household of Napoleon I., and he would often tell of having played as a child with the young King of Rome.

CHRISTINE NILSSON.—Mdme Nilsson has caused a notice to be served upon M. Moulusson, a Paris stockbroker, for the recovery of £5,800, being part of the property of her deceased husband, M. Ronzaud. Mdme Nilsson's claims amount in all to nearly £10,000, and are categorically disputed by her husband's relatives. Four of the heirs have petitioned for the appointment of a receiver, to pay the money into the National Deposit Office until the liquidation of the estate. After some legal arguments it was decreed that £5,800 shall be deposited at the Government office by M. Moulusson, without prejudice to other claimants upon this estate. If we may believe the New York papers, there is a clause in Mdme Christine Nilsson's contract with Mr Abbey, for his new Italian opera, stipulating that no artist is to receive a higher salary than the gifted lady herself. If it were otherwise, Mr Abbey would deserve compassion. The wonder is, how such appointments as are now conceded by managers can help them in making two ends meet, unless by compounding with sympathetic creditors.

* The Right Hon. Auguste Van Biene, the popular musical director at the Comedy Theatre, has a grievance, and he wants to air it. Well, as it is a serious one, I give him opportunity. Auguste, it appears, dwells in an innocent part of Brixton, visited, as a rule only by the postman and the tradespeople. In this quiet spot he practises his violoncello, and arranges and composes his music without fear of disturbance. There is, however, one day in the week when comes a dreadful change that makes him long for firearms, and wish he had never been born. Every Tuesday morning, about eight o'clock, direful noises wake him from his comfortable sleep. He hears horrible discords. He leaps from his couch, rushes to the window, and what does he see turning the inoffensive Brixton retreat into a pandemonium? A German band! and such a German band! And what do they play, or rather what do they murder? His own selections from *Rip Van Winkle*, an opera which he has been conducting for nearly three hundred nights. You have heard of the engineer hoist with his own petard. Well, it strikes me that Auguste Van Biene, made mad by his own music, is in even a worse plight. He shall have my prayers, as he already has my sympathy.

—Referee.

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